

South Devon Railway.—The works will soon be in full action; Mr. Brunel has been daily employed with a great number of men in obtaining the necessary information preparatory to the contracts being advertised. The specifications, we understand, are nearly ready, and we have every reason to believe that the public notices will soon be issued. At Dawlish Beach the soundings for the foundation have been ascertained by Mr. Brunel, and have been in some instances about 17 feet, and at other places a much less depth than was at first imagined. The station will be on the site of Mr. Kennaway's house; the cuttings through the cliff will soon be worked out, on to the rocks to the Parson and Clerk. The sand rocks, being easily cut, will soon be gone through, and the outward sea-wall facing, built of the Babbicombe lime-stone rock, will form its outward exterior of the finest workmanship. At Marley, the works will be prosecuted with the utmost despatch, and it is reported that the engineer has some improved system under consideration, which will greatly tend to expedite the work. It is considered certain that the line to Newton will be completed within twelve months, and to Plymouth within two years. The latter is not, however, so certain, as unforeseen contingencies may arise as the works are being prosecuted. At all events we may, we believe, state with safety that the line will be completed to Plymouth as soon as the tunnels can be finished. Every thing appertaining to the line is progressing most favourably, and it is arranged that a public meeting of the shareholders shall take place in Plymouth about the end of August, when a full statement of the proceedings will be laid before them.—*Western Luminary.*

The Railway via Kendal.—Preparations are being made, prior to the commencement of cutting the intended line of railway between Lancaster and Carlisle. A number of excavators are now at work in the neighbourhood of Shap, removing walls and fences, making roads, and clearing away all obstructions which stand in the direction of the line. Cart-loads of wheelbarrows and implements to effect this were removed from Kendal some days ago; and the men have entered upon their employment.

The Railway.—Mr. Locke, the engineer of the London and York line, has been at Huntingdon during the week, and the survey of the whole line is now nearly completed. A public meeting in support of it will shortly be held, with a view to get the rail as near the town as conveniently can be. The avidity with which the shares have been purchased is evidence of the opinion entertained of its being a lucrative investment, more than the 70,000 having been subscribed for within the month.

South-Eastern Railway.—We perceive that the South-Eastern Railway Company, or rather the executive of that company, on Thursday week last, at their special general meeting, have resolved to raise another 199,000*l.*, to construct a branch to Canterbury, to effect alterations, &c., on the Maidstone branch, and to complete and maintain a branch railway, approach, &c., to Folkestone harbour.

North-Western Railway.—A scheme has been branced for the purpose of making a railway from Southampton *via* Salisbury, to Bideford Bay, in Devonshire. The plan has been started by some unknown individual, whose prospectus appears in the *Taunton Courier*, and who states that a public meeting on the subject will be shortly called in Taunton.

Irish Railways.—The preparatory prospectus of the Irish Great Western Railway has been issued. It is proposed that the line shall run from Dublin to Mullingar and Athlone, a distance of sixty-six statute miles. The expenditure has been estimated by Sir John McNeill at 11,000*l.* per mile. The proposed capital is 730,000*l.*

Dublin and Cashel Railway.—On Thursday and Friday week the Dublin and Cashel Railway Bill passed the committee of the House of Lords. The Bill will receive the Royal assent in the course of a few days, and within the next three months from 15,000 to 18,000 Irish labourers will be set to work on the line.

Proceedings have commenced, near Romsey, in the construction of the Salisbury and Bishopstoke Railway.

West Indian Railway.—The first railway ever formed in the British colonies is about to be constructed in the island of Jamaica, between Kingston and Spanish Town. The length is twelve miles, though powers have been obtained from the House of Assembly to carry the line some miles further, if the projectors should think it desirable, and from the extraordinary facilities presented by the form of the land on the rich plain which extends from the sea eight or ten miles into the interior, round the greater part of the island, it is not unlikely that it will ultimately be carried much further. Although the engineer and superintendents of the works have not yet left England, yet it is expected, from the easy gradients on the line, the abundant offers of labour already received, and the forward state of the iron-work, sleepers, and so forth, all of which are in course of preparation in this country, that the line will be open in October twelve months. This will be the first line of railway ever constructed by the labour of free negroes, and also the first investment of British capital ever made in the colonies for such a purpose. Nearly the whole of the shares are held in Liverpool, Manchester, and London, and from the great amount of traffic already existing, between Kingston and Spanish Town, as well as the cheapness with which the line will be formed and the business-like hands into which the work has fallen, we have no doubt that the result will be very favourable, and will encourage the formation of railways in other parts of the British colonies.

Government Railways Bill.—On Thursday week, Mr. Gladstone informed the House of Commons, that in consequence of communications which he had recently had with several gentlemen who were opponents of this bill, he had agreed to make certain alterations in it, chiefly of omission, which would not at all impair the value of the measure. By doing this, he believed he had entirely removed the objections which had been entertained against it.

The Landowners and Railways.—It was given in evidence before the select committee, that no less a sum than 8,500,000*l.* has been expended by railway companies, in England and Scotland, on land and "compensation." This is about an average of 5,000*l.* a mile. On the Paris and Rouen railway, the item was 2,300*l.* a mile. The average in Belgium is 2,750*l.* a mile.—*Railway Record.*

Proposed Railway.—At a meeting of the citizens of Hereford, held in the Council Room on Saturday last, William Webb, Esq., Mayor, in the chair, a provisional committee was appointed, with power to investigate and arrange all matters necessary for effecting a railway communication between that city and Gloucester.

Oxford and Cheltenham Railway.—It is said that a Bill for a railway from Oxford to Cheltenham direct, will be applied for in the next session of Parliament. Surveys are in the course of being made. The broad gauge will be adopted.

The railway between Turin and Genoa, with two branches between Venice and Milan, has received royal sanction. It is to be executed at the expense of Government, and the Council of State have given directions that it shall be immediately marked out.

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY.—The annual meeting of this society took place at the society's rooms, 20, Bedford-street, Covent-garden, on the 25th ult., Charles Fowler, Esq., in the chair. The report of the committee, detailing their proceedings for the past year, chiefly with regard to their efforts to obtain some modification of the window duties, so as to effect sanitary relief in the ventilation of the habitations of the poor, the suppression of the nuisance arising from the smoke of large manufactories, the embankment of the Thames, and other street improvements, various suggestions for the improvement of the Building Act now before Parliament, &c., was read, approved, and unanimously adopted. Thanks were then given to the committee for their past services, and they were requested to continue the same for the ensuing year; and Mr. G. E. Dennes and Mr. G. A. Walker were added to the said committee.

THE NEW HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

THE following is an extract from the report of the committee appointed to inspect the works of decorative art exhibiting in King-street, St. James's, in April and May, 1844:—

"Your committee have examined the specimens of carved wood, and the designs relating to such specimens, which have been sent in by artists desirous of being employed in the decoration of the Houses of Parliament.

"Your committee have recorded their judgment respecting the comparative merit of many of the works in question, and respecting the nature of the employment for which the various artists whose works they have so noticed appear to be fitted. But not being at present in possession of sufficient information as to the extent to which wood-carving may be considered desirable in the Palace at Westminster, or as to the precise character of the works which may be required, they have thought it expedient in general to enumerate the names only without further distinction of the artists whose works have received the commendation of the committee.

"In the department of wood-carving the artists so noticed in the detailed report of the committee are Mr. Cummings, Mr. Ollett, Mr. Ringham, Mr. Freeman, Mr. Browne, and Mr. John Thomas.

"Among the artists in wood, Mr. Rogers did not comply with the terms announced in the notice put forth by the commission, and his name has, therefore, not been inserted in the foregoing list. It is, however, the opinion of the committee, that among the carvers whose works have been exhibited he holds the first place; and they consider him as the person best qualified to be intrusted with those parts of the woodwork of the House of Lords, in which great richness of effect and delicacy of execution are required.

"MAHON. "COLBOURNE.
"T. B. MACAULAY. "B. HAWES, JUN.
"GEORGE VIVIAN. "THOMAS WYSE."

"The commissioners having had reason to suppose that some of the persons who have exhibited works of decorative art may have employed other hands, or even the assistance of foreigners, in the execution of such works, have resolved that those persons who may be selected for employment in those branches of decoration shall, if the commissioners think fit, be required to produce specimens of their art, to be completed under such conditions as the commissioners may think necessary."

Correspondence.

BUNNETT AND ANOTHER *v.* SMITH.

SIR,—The above case is reported in your last Number so as to give a colour to the transaction altogether at variance with the facts, and your report might, if left uncontradicted, do us much injury; the representation of "the circumstances which gave rise to the motion," in particular, being altogether untrue, we beg that in your forthcoming Number you will do us the justice to insert the following correction.

The description of the specification of our patent is much garbled and misrepresented; we claim no particular form of hinge, only in combination with a particular form of shutter, and no mention is anywhere made of a "crank-butt hinge." We claim a particular modification of machinery (the endless screw and worm-wheel) for the purpose of raising and lowering our patent shutters, and also revolving iron shutters as heretofore made; such apparatus being admirably adapted to, but never before used for, such a purpose. We can, however, very well afford to let the specification speak for itself, merely stating, that it is absolutely false that a similar contrivance for raising and lowering such shutters "was patented and used thirty-six years ago."